

(1) Show that the applicant has prevailed and identify the position of the Office in the proceeding that the applicant alleges was not substantially justified; or

(2) Show that the demand by the Office in the proceeding was substantially in excess of, and was unreasonable when compared with, the decision in the proceeding.

(b) The application shall also include, for purposes of § 2610.106 (a) or (b), a statement that the applicant's net worth does not exceed \$2,000,000 (for individuals) or \$7,000,000 (for all other applicants, including their affiliates) or alternatively, for purposes of § 2610.106(b) only, a declaration that the applicant is a small entity as defined in 5 U.S.C. 601. However, an applicant may omit the statement concerning its net worth if:

(1) It attaches a copy of a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service that it qualifies as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3)) or, in the case of a tax-exempt organization not required to obtain a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service on its exempt status, a statement that describes the basis for the applicant's belief that it qualifies under such section; or

(2) It states that it is a cooperative association as defined in section 15(a) of the Agricultural Marketing Act (12 U.S.C. 1141j(a)).

(c) The application shall state the amount of fees and expenses for which an award is sought.

(d) The application may also include any other matters that the applicant wishes the Office to consider in determining whether and in what amount an award should be made.

(e) The application shall be signed by the applicant or an authorized officer or attorney of the applicant. It shall also contain or be accompanied by a written verification made by the applicant or authorized officer or attorney of the applicant under oath or under penalty of perjury that the information provided in the application is true and correct.

(f) These collections of information are not subject to Office of Management and Budget review under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chap-

ter 35) because they are expected to involve nine or fewer persons each year.

[57 FR 33268, July 28, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 34755, July 7, 1994; 63 FR 13116, Mar. 18, 1998]

§ 2610.202 Net worth exhibit.

(a) Each applicant, except a qualified tax-exempt organization or cooperative association, must provide with its application a detailed exhibit showing the net worth of the applicant and any affiliates (as defined in § 2610.105(f)) when the underlying adversary adjudication was initiated. The exhibit may be in any form convenient to the applicant that provides full disclosure of the applicant's and its affiliates' assets and liabilities and is sufficient to determine whether the applicant qualifies under the standards in this part. The adjudicative officer may require an applicant to file additional information to determine its eligibility for an award.

(b) Ordinarily, the net worth exhibit will be included in the public record of the proceeding. However, an applicant that objects to public disclosure of information in any portion of the exhibit and believes there are legal grounds for withholding it from disclosure may submit that portion of the exhibit directly to the adjudicative officer in a sealed envelope labeled "Confidential Financial Information," accompanied by a motion to withhold the information from public disclosure. The motion shall describe the information sought to be withheld and explain, in detail, why it falls within one or more of the specific exemptions from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(1)–(9), why public disclosure of the information would adversely affect the applicant, and why disclosure is not required in the public interest. The material in question shall be served on counsel representing the Office, but need not be served on any other party to the proceeding, if any. If the adjudicative officer finds that the information should not be withheld from disclosure, it shall be placed in the public record of the proceeding. Otherwise, any request by another party or the public to inspect or copy the exhibit shall be resolved in accordance with

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the Office of Government Ethics' established procedures under the Freedom of Information Act.

§ 2610.203 Documentation of fees and expenses.

The application shall be accompanied by full and itemized documentation of the fees and expenses, including the cost of any study, analysis, engineering report, test, project or similar matter, for which an award is sought. A separate itemized statement shall be submitted for each professional firm or individual whose services are covered by the application, showing the hours spent in connection with the proceeding by each individual, a description of the specific services performed, the rates at which each fee has been computed, any expenses for which reimbursement is sought, the total amount claimed, and the total amount paid or payable by the applicant or by any other person or entity for the services provided. The adjudicative officer may require the applicant to provide vouchers, receipts, logs, or other documentation for any fees or expenses claimed, pursuant to § 2610.306.

§ 2610.204 When an application may be filed.

(a) An application may be filed whenever the applicant has prevailed in the proceeding or in a significant and discrete substantive portion of the proceeding. An application may also be filed when the demand of the Office is substantially in excess of the decision in the proceeding and is unreasonable when compared with such decision. In no case may an application be filed later than 30 days after the Office of Government Ethics' final disposition of the proceeding.

(b) For purposes of this rule, final disposition means the date on which a decision or order disposing of the merits of the proceeding or any other complete resolution of the proceeding, such as a settlement or voluntary dismissal, becomes final and unappealable, both within the Office and to the courts.

(c) If review or reconsideration is sought or taken of a decision as to which an applicant believes it has prevailed or has been subjected to a demand from the Office substantially in

excess of the decision in the adversary adjudication and unreasonable when compared to that decision, proceedings for the award of fees shall be stayed pending final disposition of the underlying controversy. When the United States appeals the underlying merits of an adversary adjudication to a court, no decision on an application for fees and other expenses in connection with that adversary adjudication shall be made until a final and unreviewable decision is rendered by the court on the appeal or until the underlying merits of the case have been finally determined pursuant to the appeal.

[57 FR 33268, July 28, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 13116, Mar. 18, 1998]

Subpart C—Procedures for Considering Applications

§ 2610.301 Jurisdiction of adjudicative officer.

Any provision in the Office's rules and regulations other than this part which limits or terminates the jurisdiction of an adjudicative officer upon the effective date of his or her decision in the underlying proceeding shall not in any way affect his or her jurisdiction to render a decision under this part.

§ 2610.302 Filing and service of documents.

Any application for an award or other pleading or document related to an application shall be filed and served on all parties to the proceeding in the same manner as other pleadings in the proceeding, except as provided in § 2610.202(b) for confidential financial information.

§ 2610.303 Answer to application.

(a) Within 30 days after service of an application, counsel representing the Office may file an answer to the application. Agency counsel may request an extension of time for filing. If agency counsel fails to answer or otherwise fails to contest or settle the application within the 30-day period, the adjudicative officer, upon a satisfactory